

July 28, 2010

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Mayor Larson's Recycling Challenge

Mayor Matt Larson's recycling challenge started Saturday morning, April 24, 2010. Twelve families lined up to have their garbage weighed to see how they stack up against Mayor Larson, an avid recycler.

The goal of the challenge was to see which of these Snoqualmie families could reduce their garbage weight the most during the month-long challenge. The families collected their garbage for one week and brought it to City Hall where it was weighed by King County Eco Consumer and 'garbologist', Tom Watson. Tom gave some recycling tips and answered questions about how to increase recycling at home. When the weigh-in was finished, the family garbage weights ranged from .5 pounds per week to 55.5 pounds per week.

During the month-long challenge the families reduced their garbage weight by recycling more materials like paper, cardboard, soda cans, and food scraps and food soiled paper (a new recycling service available with curbside yard waste collection).

The results from the final weigh in on Saturday May 22, were reported by two measures. The first was the amount of garbage produced by each family, measured by garbage weight, and the second by the weight of garbage for each family member, representing the per capita garbage produced weekly by each family.

The results showed that six families had reduced their garbage weight by between 61% and 91%. The Kryger family, who took first in garbage weight reduction, reduced their garbage weight by 91%. Next came the Gatte family, who reduced their garbage weight by 87%. These families have reduced their garbage weight by the largest percentage during the month-long challenge. There was another winner, the Lim family who produced the least weekly garbage per family member in this contest. They produce 0.12 lbs. of garbage per family member or about 0.5 lbs. of garbage per week!

The final results are in: the Kryger and Gatte families won first and second place in achieving the largest overall reduction of garbage weight. The Lim family won first prize as the family with the least weekly garbage weight per family member.

Improving Recycling in Snoqualmie

The King County Solid Waste Division found that although most King County residents participate in their curbside recycling program, more can be done. More than half of what ends up in the Cedar Hills regional landfill could have been recycled. Currently Snoqualmie recycles 35% of what can be recycled; the remainder is being put in the garbage. We can do more.

By improving your recycling efforts, you will not only reduce what's going to the landfill, but you may be able to reduce the size of your garbage can and lower your garbage bill.

Challenge Links

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